

possibility must be seriously raised that it was super-psi. I base my case (and my caution) on an episode which I retell under the heading of "Closing commentary" (pp.38–39): two of Oliver Lodge's adult children held a sitting in Birmingham where they tried to induce the spirit of Raymond to get the medium's control to mention the word 'Honolulu' at a contemporaneous sitting in London. This word was indeed mentioned, as I recounted in the relevant transcript. Lodge (1918, p.275) tentatively 'explains' this success as Raymond 'transporting' the information to the medium's control in London. Perhaps this is indeed what really happened. But superlative ESP on the part of the medium seems a possible explanation. It is telling that Lodge omitted this incident from his article on Raymond in the *SPR Proceedings* (Lodge, 1916). It is equally telling that Tom Cross omits to mention it in his critical letter. Lodge's case for survival would have been stronger without this incident, and, I suggest, he knew it.

To conclude, much as I usually admire Tom Cross's treatment of evidence for survival, I find I must disagree with his assessment of my admittedly concise evaluation of Lodge's evidence for survival from *Raymond*. I am no antagonist to the notion of survival—far from it—but in these days of (occasionally) superlative remote viewing it is hard not to be tempted sometimes by the super-ESP hypothesis. I prefer seeing evidence where this hypothesis is unlikely. Perhaps Tom Cross himself will be (if he hasn't been already) an instrument of such evidence.

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To the Editor,

In his counter to my arguments in favour of the four-dimensional block universe, John Randall points out that the quantum theory is securely based on a mass of experimental evidence, whereas parallel support for the general theory of relativity is far weaker. I accept his point, but I do not think it weakens my case.

We agree that these two theories are incompatible, but it is not true that this also applies to the quantum and *special* relativity theories. On the contrary, Dirac's major achievement was to reconcile the two theories and thus to construct a truly relativistic quantum mechanics. Thus, the whole of modern quantum theory is now erected on the foundation of special relativity theory and the massive corpus of experimental evidence that Randall refers to can

equally well be adduced in favour of the special theory. But it was this latter theory which first gave birth to the block universe concept in the lectures of Minkowski, who in 1908 pronounced "From now on, space by itself and time by itself must sink into the shadows, while only a union of the two preserves independence". The truth is that special relativity theory shows that past, present and future cannot be given a strict meaning without reference to an observer and it is this indissoluble link to a specific conscious mind that dooms any attempt to extend these concepts to the world at large and thus to regard the cosmos as a three-dimensional entity evolving in time. The general theory also subscribes to the notion of a block universe, but only because it arose out of the special theory. The viability of this notion is in no way dependent upon that of the general theory. Thus, the remarkable success of the relativistic quantum theory must be regarded as strong evidence in support of Minkowski's view of the world.

In regard to the indeterminacy inherent in quantum theory, I see this as a separate issue. The block universe may be indeterminate in the sense that two sets of world lines that are identical in their earlier stages may exhibit differences later on—or they may not. Whichever is the case, special relativity rules out the possibility of a world that only exists *now*, since 'now' can be given no objective meaning.

In this context, it is relevant to make the point that the block universe should commend itself to psychologists, since it accords to consciousness a characteristic role in the affairs of the physical world; for it is then consciousness that must be held responsible for the lapsing of time, a phenomenon which would otherwise be absent from the scientific model.

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### Editorial Farewell

As this is the last issue that will appear under my editorship, I wish to say a brief farewell to our readers. I took over as editor in 1981 from my predecessor, the late Renée Haynes, author of (among her other works) *The Society for Psychical Research 1882-1982: A History* (Macdonald & Co. 1982). The *Journal* will again revert to a woman editor with my successor, Dr Zofia Weaver, an academic and a linguist in whom I have every confidence (as her first name may suggest, she is of Polish extraction; as her surname may suggest, she is married to an Englishman). Fortunately there will be continuity since our production editor, David Ellis, will carry on in his job, as will our capable book-review editor, Michael Coleman.

I can only hope that I have served the Society and the cause of psychical research well in my capacity as editor and express my confidence that I am leaving the *Journal* in good hands. I wish my successor good luck and would like to use this occasion to thank those who have served as referees and to send my good wishes to all our readers.

JOHN BELOFF